

ENERGY MATTERS

From Garbage Can To Power Grid

(NAPSA)—This may come as a surprise: The nation's solid waste management industry—the same companies that pick up household trash and haul it away—may also be lighting and heating your home.

The companies are turning garbage into “green energy.”

Here's How

Trash decomposes and produces gases such as methane. Using innovative technology developed by solid waste management companies, the gas is captured and generally piped to utilities, where it is turned into electricity or transported directly to nearby manufacturing plants, schools or other buildings and used to power heating and cooling systems. The entire process is carefully managed to prevent odors and leakage.

Through this process, the solid waste industry provides enough clean, low-cost, renewable energy to light and heat 1.5 million homes a year and helps school districts and government agencies save hundreds of thousands of dollars on energy bills. Big companies such as Honeywell and Dell are saving millions of dollars a year by using power generated from landfill gas to power offices and manufacturing sites. In one recent project at the University of New Hampshire, a pipeline from a neighboring landfill is expected to provide the school with as much as 80 to 85 percent of its energy.

Further Benefits

Waste-based energy does more than save money. The use of landfill-gas-to-energy helps advance national security by reducing reliance on foreign oil. It also helps



Your trash can be very enlightening—in fact, it can be turned into the energy that lights and heats your home.

to address global warming because using landfill gas for energy involves capturing methane, a greenhouse gas. The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that waste-based energy projects save more than 270 million barrels of oil a year—the equivalent of eliminating air pollution from 27 million cars.

“We believe people will be surprised when they learn about our industry’s role in producing affordable ‘green energy’ and helping to reduce our dependence on foreign oil,” says Bruce Parker, president of the National Solid Wastes Management Association.

“This is a truly significant environmental achievement. It makes us feel very proud of our people and the commitment of the thousands of companies, large and small, that make up our industry.”

Learn More

More information is at www.environmentalistseveryday.org.